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Escape from Reason - CAMS Production Honors Thesis

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Escape from Reason

CAMS Production Honors Thesis

Audrey Lynn Stevens

Submitted for Fulfillment of the Prerequisite for Honors in Cinema and Media Studies

21 April 2017

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I. REFLECTION

INTRODUCTION

According to Henri Cartier-Bresson, “A photographer must always work with the greatest respect for his [her] subject and in terms of his [her] own point of view.” Respect for my subject has been a driving force throughout my career, and in all of my work, I give full attention and respect to each individual I portray and do it in a way that is not only insightful but also beautiful. Making this thesis film was the ultimate test of that skill and evident in the content.

When dealing with the sensitive subject of a character contemplating suicide, one has to be constantly aware of the visual representation of that character. Representation was only one of my numerous goals for this project. I desire to respectfully, honorably, and truly represent, to the best of my ability, the real and raw emotions felt by someone who is suicidal and therefore have the audience share in that experience through meaningful visual esthetics. My primary goal was to shoot images that would generate sensation (*pure cinema*). I hope that by focusing heavily on the visual aesthetics of the film, trying to draw out the raw emotions from my audience, I will be able to not only challenge myself by exploring the potential of framing, but also properly represent the subject matter I am portraying.

PRE-PRODUCTION

I knew that this thesis was going to be an accumulation of everything I had learned and studied up to this point, and I knew I would encounter challenges on the way. Because of this, I created an “Artist Journal,” documenting all of my creative ideas and processes. Starting in September up until production in February, I documented every idea, every conversation, and all information related to my thesis. By having everything contained in one and eventually two

notebooks, I was able to centralize my thinking. The journal not only contained my ideas such as rough storyboards and dialogue, but also all my background research on the nature of suicide. My research included reading books and websites regarding statistics related to suicide, including the gender, age, economic class, and other related factors of suicide, including depression, sexual assault, and trauma of any kind. It also included the films I watched to do research as inspiration for style, technique, and shot design. Some of these films included *The Bridge*, *Madame Bovary*, *Anna Karenina* (both film and novel), and *Marnie*. By keeping track of every aspect of my thesis, and once creating my basic story arc, entering the writing process became quick and easy.

Even before I started the writing process, I knew that the first key point in the story structure was that my character needed to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge. This idea not only propelled most of my research, it directed me in all of my writing. Audiences always love a happy ending because it is unlike their own reality; they wish to escape their own reality. I wanted the ending to be psychologically real, to be able to extract that human emotion and make the audience ache in their chests. In Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*,

“[S]he knew that much attention and care were needed not to injure one's work when removing the wrappings that obscure the idea, and that all wrappings must be removed, but as to the art of painting, the technique, it does not exist... In all [s]he painted and ever had painted [s]he saw defects that were of the idea, which [s]he could not now remedy without spoiling the work as a whole.” (431, Tolstoy)

Tolstoy was suggesting that once you know the ending, the rest of the artwork can be produced by removing other layers and wrappings to result in the final piece. Anna's was the approach I decided to take.

Leo Tolstoy, and specifically, *Anna Karenina* (2012 film and novel), was the single most influential piece of art for my thesis. Not only did the story inspire the narrative, it also inspired the background and mindset for the character as well as minor details within the film. Examples include my character's first suicide attempt, her looking to the sky before her death, and her quivering jaw after the phone conversation with her mother; she even reads the novel before her death. The looking up to the sky and quivering jaw, according to Tolstoy represent truth and nature revealing truth and death. Anna's suicide is a splitting in two, and her death, her feeling of being two people, is the idea that helped propel her character throughout the 2012 *Anna Karenina* film for me. I determined these plot points around the same time that I decided on the means of her death.

Before the pre-production and writing process of my eventual idea ever started, back in June and July when I was proposing a thesis topic to my advisor, I had a different plot proposed. I spent months aiming to build a conventional narrative that would entertain my audience. My first idea could not hold or build a cohesive narrative. After months of struggling to propel my narrative forward, I decided to change the entire idea. I was sitting on the bus one day, and I turned to Brandon, my producer, gaffer, and partner, and told him, "Scrap it. Scrap the serial killers. I want to do what I want to do." He agreed and supported me throughout the rest of the process.

Since I knew I wanted my film to have high production value (filming in 4K, hiring professional actors) I knew I needed money to cover my necessary expenses. Therefore, I applied for the Schiff Fellowship, which is provided by Wellesley College to assist thesis students with their projects. Unfortunately, I was not provided funding. Because I was not given funding through Wellesley, I had to find other means to fund my film. I was lucky enough to have

worked on multiple commercial and industry film jobs during winter and spring break. I was able to raise enough money to not only fund my thesis, but also to improve on necessary skills that I would then apply to my own production. Not only did I fund my film during winter break, but I also wrote the entire script with rounds of edits.

I went through six drafts until I reached my final draft. With each draft, I dug deeper into the story and personality of the character. I started off with an outline of the story, figuring out where I wanted the dramatic turns to be, as well as finalizing the main story line. I then proceeded to write a rough draft, fleshing out main and general ideas related to what my characters were saying. After this draft was done, I had a friend go through and critique it, telling me what steps I needed to take. Throughout the writing process, I was not only constantly improving my script, but also evaluating my equipment needs.

The equipment was the single most important aspect of project for me. I knew going into it I wanted to film in 4K. I did extensive research to determine which camera would be the most suitable to my needs. The camera had to fit certain necessary specifications: film at 4K, 120fps, and have high ISO settings, affordability, mobility, and reasonable weight. I started looking at one of the more popular film cameras, “The Blackmagic,” as well as several others: Canon C300s, Canon C100s, and numerous Sony and Panasonic cameras like the GH4. I finally decided on the Sony A7S II, for multiple reasons, but mostly because it had all of the features I was looking for as well as image quality (compression of highlights and shadows) like SLog3. This look allowed me to better judge the difference between the highlights and darks within the frame.

However, before the final script was written and the equipment list was made up, I had my main actor already in place. Most students would usually go to their friends or their classmates to be actors in their thesis films, but because of the subject matter, I knew that I

needed an actress who would be able to handle the emotional tone of the character as well as be willing to work with me to contribute a unique aspect of herself to the film. I wanted someone who had worked in film before (industry, indie, commercial, or student), and therefore would have a broad understanding of the process. I went on Backstage.com, a casting website, and set my parameters: 21-29, female. That was all that I needed. After looking around and contacting four women, I found Shea Whitehead. I sent her a message and asked if she would be willing to audition. We tried to hold an in-person audition multiple times, but we had to reschedule multiple times. I finally decided that it would be easier if she just sent me an audition video. She did, and I was very impressed. She has microgestures in her eyes that bring something unique to the character. I knew she was the one.

We finally met in person to discuss the narrative and the character and to get to know each other (this happened in October). We spent around four hours talking about our past experiences and who this character is, who she can be, and what happened to her. I am very grateful to have worked with Shea for as long as I did; she was hired in some of the earliest moments of pre-production. She was informative and helpful in creating the character of Paige.

The other actors were not as difficult to find. For the character Jasmine, I asked a local actor from the town of Wellesley, who brought a certain elegance and power to the character. Jasmine needed to be what Paige was/wanted to be. For the waitress, I had a more challenging time finding an actor. I reached out to Wellesley College to see if there was a gem in the rough. A few people responded, but only one drew my eye. I knew I could be flexible on the character of the waitress. All I wanted from that character was a friendly face. For the character of the little girl, I needed someone who could possibly look like my main character as well as a child who had been in films before. I was lucky enough to find a child actor who had been in the film *Joy*

on Backstage. I contacted her agent, who connected me to her mother. In short, casting was a difficult, lengthy, but ultimately satisfying process. I needed to figure out everyone's availability, and most importantly, determine whether the chemistry between the characters was believable.

Now that I had my equipment, my script, and my cast, I needed my crew. Though I knew I wanted to be the Director of Photography (DP), I also knew that I couldn't do this alone. I made the decision that I needed a full crew. I emailed Wellesley students as well as friends I had met on other gigs to help me out. My final crew included fellow CAMS majors, students interested in film and the process of making a film, professionals in the industry, and students I had worked with in the Marlboro program (a semester away program during spring 2016). With such a large crew in place, I was finally able to begin production.

PRODUCTION

Before each production day, the call sheet, equipment list, script, and shot list were sent out to each cast and crew member. This allowed every shoot day to be speedy and organized, with everyone on the same page. There were a total of four (not including a last minute four-hour day) shooting days, each day lasting an average of ten hours. Each day introduced new locations, challenges, problems. There was a total of six locations: the Collins Cafe, 25 Fuller Street [an Airbnb we used as Paige's apartment], The Davis Museum, Riverway Park, Wellesley Farms MBTA stop, and the Harvard Bridge.

Day one involved two of the longest and most prop-heavy scenes: the last meal at the cafe and the first suicide attempt at the train station. Before shooting even started, I gathered my cast and crew and addressed them. An important piece of advice I received from Professor Jesse Green was, "Stay calm, and your crew will trust you when something unexpected happens and therefore be able to tackle any challenge that comes their way." This was to become an essential

piece of advice throughout the filming. I first thanked every cast and crew member for taking time out of their schedule to make this dream a reality. I wanted them to feel confident and comfortable in their jobs and the film. Myself, Phil (the director), and Brandon then continued by going over some safety rules (for example, if you need to plug in a phone, consult Brandon), respect for each other, and other necessary set rules. Set up for the first location was initially planned to take only about an hour, but it ended up lasting a little over two, cutting an hour out of our shooting time. This meant that last-minute decisions needed to be made, including cutting out a shot that was later filmed on the morning of day three. However, once shooting started, it went quickly, smoothly, and efficiently. Phil, Brandon, and I would consult each other for each last-minute decision as well as when we were moving on what needed to be done. I would delegate to them what lighting setup we were moving to next and what props and actor positions were necessary. I would then delegate to my 1st and 2nd Assistant Camera (AC) where I wanted the camera placed and what lens I wanted. We successfully wrapped the first location and had an hour lunch break, later moving to our second location: the train station.

Before filming at the train station, Phil and I informed everyone of the high danger risk of the location and made sure everyone was aware of the severity and sensitivity of the set. This setup depended on shooting consistently through the so-called “golden hour” (while the sun is setting). The setup was also dependent on the two trains that were coming through the station at that exact time. This produced one of the many moments of serendipity and luck during the filming process. We knew we wanted the train to pass behind Paige as she was talking to Jasmine; however, we also wanted the possibility of cutting to an insert of the train coming down the tracks. Luckily, there were two trains that day of filming, and they were close enough in time that the light matched. Toward the end of the scene, the sun was setting a little faster than

expected, so we had to put up a last-minute light that would mimic the light emitted by the sun. This scene was very quickly wrapped once the train behind Paige passed by. Day one was a success and marked our first step into a successful production process.

Day two, in contrast, turned out to be the most difficult shooting day, introducing new challenges and problems. It was planned to be a shorter day with only one location: the Davis Museum. On this day, we had our skeleton crew, with only four crew members at a single time (myself, Phil, Joanna, Jennifer, and then Katie). Such a small crew made shooting more stressful because my focus was distributed over more departments, including lighting, sound, props, and DP. I was distracted and therefore forgot to do some essential tasks, such as adjusting white balance and color temperature, which would eventually affect post-production.

Shooting with Shea went fairly quickly, but once our child actor arrived, so did many unexpected issues. There are three rules in film: 1. Don't work with children. 2. Don't work with animals. 3. Don't work with water. I now understand the purpose of rule number one. Brooke (5 years old) has been featured in films such as *Joy*, so she was aware of the filming process, which was both a benefit and a disadvantage. During our first attempt, we had her wear a lavalier microphone, which she eventually took off because it was uncomfortable for her. She did not want to cooperate with us. After we got one single wide shot, she wanted to leave. Her mother used many tactics to try to convince her to participate, but she was stubborn and had already made up her mind. She left, and so we decided to just go with it and cheat Brooke's presence in a scene. Ironically, after about half an hour, I received a text from her mother informing me Brooke had changed her mind. She was ready to shoot.

Brooke returned and told me that she would "only do five takes." Her self-imposed limit was very intimidating, especially since I had planned to shoot shots of her from three different

angles. We did what we could, getting only one take for each angle. This limited me in the editing process, but it was better than our initial footage. After we finished our fifth take, she shouted, “Done!” Luckily, I used my womanly charm and convinced her to do one more, saying maybe her mom would get her more candy. She did just that one more and then ran off to get candy from her mom, which she later shared with all the crew.

Working with Brooke was rather difficult, but it was also fun and a learning experience. In addition, day two produced one of those moments of serendipity. For the Little Girl’s costume, I asked Brooke to wear a tutu, but I never discussed exactly what color I wanted the tutu to be. It turned out that her mother had one with hints of blue in it, which matched Paige’s dress. The costuming made her appear even more of a young Paige, deepening the significance of her appearance at the museum. The final two shooting days took place a week later, again on a Saturday and Sunday.

Day three was the longest of the four, totalling a 20-hour work day. The day began with shooting a makeup insert for the cafe scene, which had to be done in the morning. The makeup scene was with a skeleton crew of just me, my 1st AC, Sully, and my Gaffer, Brandon, as well as our two extras. This shot took about three hours to set-up, shoot, and tear down. Once we had finished with this scene, we packed up, loaded up the rest of the crew, and headed over to the apartment location, which would be our home base and location over the next two shooting days. The apartment was an AirBnb that I reserved for the two days we were there. Parking at the location brought new challenges we hadn’t had to face before: unloading the equipment at the apartment and then driving to a paid parking lot. Setting up at this location took much longer than expected, almost three hours. The first scene shot in the apartment was the first scene of the film, which takes place in the bathroom. Set-up took a long time for a variety of reasons: grip

and electric struggled to set up the lights in such a tight space; I had forgotten numerous props (eg. a pill bottle), and we had to change some set dressing (for example, the shower curtain). Shooting also took longer than expected. This scene had more shots, and therefore more camera set-ups, than any other scene did. Because this scene took longer than expected, and because the weather was worse than expected, we decided, for the safety of our actor, that we would reschedule the final scene to the last day of shooting. This meant that we had the entire night to film the phone conversation scene, which is the single most emotional moment in the entire film. Shooting this scene was not only emotionally taxing for my actor, but also for myself, and therefore we had to minimize the number of angles we had to shoot. Both of us were exhausted, and we had to wrap early enough to leave the apartment. I knew that especially with this scene I wanted a long closeup shot so that the audience would be able to stay with the character during the most emotionally raw scene in the film.

Day four was by far the longest and hardest day of the entire production. With only two hours of sleep the night before, I had to make it through a 14-hour day of shooting, starting with the second scene in the apartment. This was the last scene needed in the apartment, as well my favorite one to shoot in the apartment. The majority of light used was the natural light from the window behind my actor. The scene also had multiple last-minute shot ideas, all inserts. Cast and crew then went to our next location, Riverway Park.

At this point the serendipity that we had experienced every day just vanished. 30 minutes after her call, the actor playing the Old Woman dropped out. The purpose of the woman was to make Paige feel uncomfortable about smoking and that she should value her life. The Old Woman would then be the catalyst for Paige leaving the park to go to the next location, the train station. After a slight moment of panic, I walked over to a bench and sat quietly thinking about

what I could possibly do. I took a moment, calmly, and thought up a new plan that would continue the story arc and the flow and pacing of the film. I needed an impetus that would make Paige get up from the bench and leave. That impetus ended up being a male stranger trying to talk to Paige. I consulted with Brandon, Phil, and Shea about their thoughts on my idea. Phil was very opposed to the idea of a guy trying to talk to her; he believed it did not go with the tone of the film. Brandon and Shea were open to the possibility. Having my actor quit on me and then having to change the scene completely was the single most difficult moment of the filming process.

Our final scene to shoot was also the final scene of the film. Because it was 10 degrees with 15 mph winds, my 2nd AD allowed only 30 minutes to shoot the scene for safety purposes. Luckily, we had scouted and planned the set up early enough that all that was needed was putting the actress on her mark and then shooting. When we wrapped, it had been 30 minutes on the dot.

Wrapping day four was the happiest moment of my life thus far. Not only had I completed and shot my own film, but I was thrilled that the final product had turned out exactly how I had envisioned it. Without help from my crew, meticulous preparation, and an incredibly talented cast, I could never have accomplished such an incredible feat. Shooting this film was the most challenging but rewarding four days of my life. I just could not wait to begin post-production.

POST-PRODUCTION

Entering the taxing and time-consuming post-production stage is intimidating. But because I had scheduled the shoot early in the semester, I had allowed time to make multiple edits, to communicate with advisors, and to work closely with my composer on what needed to be done to have the final product. When entering the post-production phase, I knew the steps that

needed to be taken. First off was labelling. This step involved transferring all of the footage and sound and then labeling it to match the slate number, roll, scene, and take. Afterwards, I went through and cut scene by scene. This was a difficult process, as I had to go through 10 scenes, some much longer and more dialogue heavy than others. For each scene, and for the film itself, I had to calculate the pacing that best propelled the story forward while still keeping my initial style in play.

The rhythmic pacing in the film centers on spending long chunks of time on our subject in emotionally strong moments and not cutting away. By not cutting away, I am forcing my audience to spend longer than the normal amount of time with the character, watching her go through emotional arcs. The story then changes to telling it through her face and her emotional journey through the day. After cutting the first draft, I sent copies to David Kelley, Winifred Wood, and Stefana McClure (visiting artist) for critique. Each person suggested specific changes to make and made overall comments. The comments mostly focused on what needed to be cut to keep the pacing and story moving with the rhythm I wanted throughout the whole piece. Taking those comments, I proceeded to make the final cut. I made a lot of adjustments and even cut scenes out all together because they no longer were necessary, did not help the story progress well, or did not match the tone or style of the film.

My colorist went through color grading shot by shot, making sure each scene matched in lighting and tone. I had a certain look designed for the film that needed to be implemented and distributed throughout the film. My main desire was for certain colors, specifically blue and red, to stand out in the frame, but not so much as to detract from the film or distract the viewer. Certain scenes were especially hard to color grade, especially the museum scene. This was the scene I had shot with Brooke, and because of the small crew and the temperamental challenges

of shooting with a child, I forgot certain essentials, such as adjusting color temperature and ISO. This made color correcting much more of a challenge. The lighting is drastically different from one shot to the next (See Figure 1). We therefore had to adjust accordingly during the editing process, matching skin tone and the whites of the wall for a cohesive look from shot to shot. The final image resulted by averaging out the difference between the two shots (See Figure 2).

Figure 1.

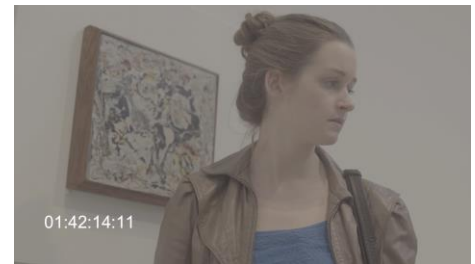
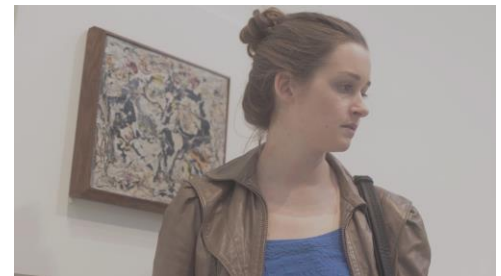


Figure 2.



In addition to the visual aspect of post production, I also hired on an old friend, a Berklee College of Music graduate, to score the film. We went through the film together, going through beat by beat and deciding which parts needed a score and what type of mood and tone I wanted to set. Over the course of editing process, I saw my footage go from beautiful to something that I never imaged I would create. My film had finally become a film.

Now that my film was complete, I needed a title. During production, I had a stand-in title: *Lasting*. However, this did not resonate with me, what I believed, or with my character. The origin of the title also has a practical origin, and I wanted the title of this film to come from a

place of genuine understanding and love of both the character and the novel it is based on. I decided to go through the novel *Anna Karenina* in search of a title. Scrolling through, especially on the notes related to Anna's suicide, I found a line that stood out. " 'Reason has been given to man to enable him to escape from his troubles.'...These words seemed to answer Anna's thought. 'To escape from his troubles...' " (693, Tolstoy) As I read through, I started to better understand both the character Anna and my character Paige. The purpose of this title was to deepen not only my character's experience but also my audience's experience.

CONCLUSION

Completing this thesis film was the single most challenging experience I've had at Wellesley College, but I could not be more grateful that I did it. It forced me to discover, create, and define my own style and technique. Creating a film of this scale as a student is especially difficult when also trying to finish other classes, work at various jobs, and deal with many other unexpected moments in life.

The most rewarding part of this project was collaborating with fellow members of the film community, both professional and student. By working with such incredible people, I was encouraged by them to keep pushing. I saw how hard and thoroughly they worked, pushing me to keep going. The greatest struggle was the time the project took out of my days. For each of the four days of shooting, we would spend about 12 hours a day shooting; this was a drain not only on me but also on the my crew. After a 12-hour shooting day, I would then have to continue working on sending out the call sheets and reviewing the footage. It was incredibly exhausting and very stressful. At the end of it, though, I am extremely grateful that I have the experience because it was the most empowering and beneficial learning experience that I could have possibly had.

Throughout working on this project for the past year, I have come to learn not only film lessons, but also life lessons as well, ranging from the creative to the practical. Regarding the creative, I learned on my own how to write scripts by studying podcasts I found on the Internet. With that came learning how to form story structure, character development, story arcs, and dynamic and revealing dialogue, all while trying to stay sensitive and understanding about my audience and subject. In addition, I learned how to properly distinguish framing between different lenses, including 35mm, 50mm, and 85mm. This lesson is one that will help me as I proceed into the film industry as a future DP. It is essential for DPs to be able to tell their 1st AC exactly which lens is necessary for the next shot. So many creative people were depending on me to get the framing right, and that was one of the most challenging lessons to learn. I also had to learn how to describe the necessary setup and structure of the light I needed for the scene and then inform my Gaffer. This was the most challenging lesson; I needed to learn and use the math of light to make an image look cohesive throughout the film.

The practical lessons I learned while working on this film included how to delegate different tasks to different groups and also how to keep track of finances and time. Not only was I the DP, but because I was the writer and creator of the film, I was also the Prop Manager, Costume Designer, and Writer. Having this many jobs was taxing, so I learned to rely on my 1st AD, 2nd AD, and Director to assist me. This level of delegation was essential, allowing me to focus on what I needed to, which was creating the frame and then filming.

Finances and time are two completely different beasts. Because I had to fund my entire thesis myself, I had to keep a close eye on what exactly was being bought, returned, and used, including equipment, props, and food. It was slightly overwhelming to keep track of all the money that was being spent, but because I set a budget for myself, I was able to stick to that and

keep better track of what I had left. Time, however, was more difficult to budget. Every day we shot, the necessary time changed. Set ups and teardowns took longer than expected, props had to be bought at the last minute, and the weather sometimes cut our shooting time in half. These factors were challenging and frightening, but by staying calm and accommodating for each minute that we spent filming, we were able to get everything that we needed in the allotted time.

Throughout this project, I challenged myself not only to master what I already know, but also to practice what I do not. I believe that I achieved my goal of defining my own style and technique while also giving the audience a personal and real experience, one that will hopefully stay with them far beyond watching my film. I hope that the techniques I learned in this process will go with me into the future.

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Universal Pictures. 2012. DVD

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II. PRODUCTION

TREATMENT

Title: Escape from Reason

Writer: Audrey Stevens

Director: Phil Teves

Director of Photography: Audrey Stevens

Logline: A woman's struggle as she tries to find meaning in her existence on the last day of her life.

Synopsis:

Cutting herself was the straw that broke the camel's back. Paige was done with her life, the way she was living, and more importantly, the way she was feeling. She, irrationally, quickly tries to overdose on her medication. However, after calming down for a moment and realizing that there is so much that she wants to do beforehand, she decides not to overdose. To fulfill her last day before she commits suicide, she needs to be able to take the day off. She tries to convince her boss to give her the day off, knowing that everything she offers is irrelevant to her because she had nothing to lose. She eventually convinces him and goes off to have her last meal. For her last meal, she orders almost everything on the menu, only eating a small bite of each and enjoying as much as she can without overdoing it.

She also desires to experience beauty and to her, a true beauty. She desires to be one with that beauty, to touch that beauty. She visits her local museum, looking for that piece that grabs her attention. She stops at a Jackson Pollock, one of the smallest pieces in the show. She is wooed by it and must touch it. However, once she is nearly touching it, a little girl interrupts her. The little girl appears to have just popped into existence and reminds Paige of the hope and innocence she once had; it is serial for her. This moment is broken when the little girl's mother

comes out of nowhere, taking the little girl away. Having being jarred by such an experience, she needs a moment of rest.

To have a mental break, she goes to a park to finish reading her novel and smoke a cigarette. While there, she is interrupted by a man trying to talk to her. She leaves the park and finishes her book, *Anna Karenina*, at the train station, where she is planning on committing suicide. Once finished with the novel, she walks to her death, only to be interrupted by an old friend, whom she has not seen since dance.

Jasmine, the friend, reminds her of the importance of connections to the people around her, so she rushes home and calls her mom, only to get the answering machine. She leaves a voicemail apologizing for all she did wrong as well as reassuring her mother that the mother did nothing wrong. Now that she has left a sense of peace with her mother, she knows that she still has to commit suicide.

She walks along a nearby bridge. She looks up and sees the stars above her, and she looks down to see the cold, dark water below. She checks her phone and ignores the text, checks that no one is watching her, and jumps.

The mother listens to her daughter's voicemail daily... over and over again.

CAST OVERVIEW

Paige

Shea Whitehead

Description: 23-years old, ex-ballerina, self-critical, depression, suicidal

Costume: Blue sundress, brown leather jacket, tights, boots

Props: Bag and phone



Jasmine

Marina Pitombeira

Description: 25-years old, ballerina, Paige's old friend

Costume: Sweatpants, ballerina bodysuit, ballerina bun, heavy coat

Props: Sports bag



Waitress

Karina Ithier

Description: 17-years old, overly friendly

Costume: Dark jeans, grey shirt, dark apron

Props: Notebook, pencil, receipt, cafe food and menu



Little Girl

Brooke Peasley

Description: 4-years old, wants to be a ballerina, innocent

Costume: Tutu, leggings and shirt, hair down

Props: N/A



Little Girl's Mom

Stacey Peasley

Description: 35-years old, lawyer, helicopter parent

Costume: Young mom-esque clothing, suit

Props: N/A



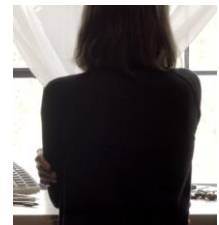
Mom

Deborah Matzner

Description: 45-years old, teacher, loving and worried


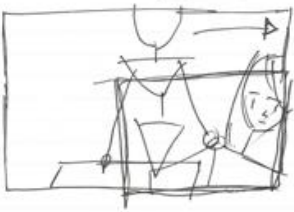
Costume: Mom-esc, dark clothes- sweater and jeans

Props: Answering machine



PRODUCTION ESSENTIALS

JOURNAL ENTRIES EXCERPTS

pan camera to other character as if she is opening up w/ friend

stance position: face, fingers, feet, go!

normal speed bolt → interview section

→ blue: intellectual.
 Positive: Intelligence, communication trust, efficiency, serenity, ducky, logic, coolness, reflection, calm.
 Negative: coldness, aloofness, lack of emotion, unfriendliness.

→ grey:
 Positive: Psychological neutrality
 Negative: Lack of confidence, dampness, depression, hibernation, lack of energy

→ black:
 Positive: Sophistication, glamour, security, emotional safety, efficiency, substance
 Negative: oppression, coldness, menace, heaviness

→ white:
 Positive: Hygiene, sterility, clarity, purity, cleanliness, simplicity, sophistication, efficiency
 Negative: Sterility, coldness, barriers, withdrawal, elitism

→ red: physical
 Positive: physical courage, strength, warmth, energy, basic survival, fight or flight, stimulation, masculinity.
 Close eyes (is open) because next shot is her


AUTO ETHNOGRAPHY
 Poetry - T.S. Elliot: A Game of Chess
 Photos - film
 Video - digital
 (note: move hair)

repetitive, methodical, steady pace, volume, non-threatening
 Speakers


different visual focus on the usual
 isolate the noise

trained a lot for this
 boys even intimidated by you

① make a point about their body
 ②


 on the escalator people rushing by her

Notes: have people look at her, sound is muted


 close-up

Note: Stay on her - change & slowly start to intensify sound.
 OR
 vertigo style, zoom

clip
 no image just sound
 interview
 new bit
 new bit
 interviewer
 new sound
 run credits

EQUIPMENT LIST

TALENT RELEASE

TALENT RELEASE AGREEMENT

For valuable consideration of a fee of _____, the sufficiency and receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I, the undersigned, agree as follows:

a. I consent to the use of my name, voice, image, likeness, and any and all attributes of my personality, in, on or in connection with any film, audio tape, video tape, audio-visual work, photograph, illustration, animation, or broadcast, in any media or embodiment, now known or unknown, including, without limitation, all formats of computer readable media, produced by or for the benefit of **Audrey Stevens Productions**.

I further consent to the use of my name, voice, image, likeness, and any and all attributes of my personality in any advertising or promotional material created or used in connection with **Escape from Reason** and each such item of advertising or promotional material will be considered a "Work" for purposes of this agreement. I acknowledge and agree that the Work (the products and results of the services to be rendered by me) is a work made for hire and I agree that the Work (and all rights therein, including, without limitation, copyright) belongs to and shall be the sole and exclusive property of **Audrey Stevens Productions**.

b. If for any reason the Work would not be considered a work made for hire under applicable law, I hereby irrevocably sell, assign, and transfer to **Audrey Stevens Productions**, its successors and assigns (a) any and all claims of entire right, title and interest in and to the copyright in **Escape from Reason**, (b) the exclusive and perpetual right throughout the world to use, print, produce, publish, copy, display, perform, exhibit, transmit, broadcast, disseminate, market, advertise, sell, lease, license, transfer, modify, and create derivative works from **Escape from Reason** in any media or format, now known or unknown, for any purpose whatsoever.

c. I waive any right to inspect, examine or approve the content of **Escape from Reason**.

d. I agree that **Audrey Stevens Productions** will have no obligation to utilize the authorizations and rights I grant to **Audrey Stevens Productions** hereunder.

e. I hereby release, discharge, and agree to hold harmless **Audrey Stevens Productions**, its legal representatives and assigns, all persons acting under its authority, and those for whom it is acting, from all claims, causes of action and liability of any kind, now known or unknown, in law or in equity, based upon or arising out of **Escape from Reason** or this agreement including, without limitation, claims of libel, slander, invasion of privacy, right of publicity, defamation, trademark infringement, and copyright infringement.

f. I represent and warrant that I am over the age of eighteen (18) years, and have the right to contract in my own name. I further affirm that the authorizations and rights granted hereunder do not conflict with or violate the rights of any third party.

g. I have read the above authorization, release and agreement, prior to its execution; I fully understand the contents thereof. This agreement will be binding upon my heirs, successors, representatives, and assigns.

Audrey Stevens Productions

(signature, parent or legal guardian signature if under 18 years)

Name : Date :

Address :

Telephone : Email :

SHOT LIST

Day 1 of 4

Scene #	Shot #	Camera #	Shot Size	Movement	Gear	Location	EXT/INT	Notes	Preferred	Duration	Sound
4	1		WS/establishing		tripod	Collins Cafe	INT	Whole scene		20min	yes
4	2		insert		shoulder rig	Collins Cafe	INT	looking at booth ahead of her		20min	yes
4	3		CU		shoulder rig	Collins Cafe	INT	whole scene		20mins	yes
4	4		MCU		shoulder rig	Collins Cafe	INT	waitress' arm		20mins	yes
4	5		insert		shoulder rig	Collins Cafe	INT	mimosa		20mins	yes
4	6		CU		shoulder rig	Collins Cafe	INT	drink mimosa and turns		20mins	yes
4	7		insert		tripod	Collins Cafe	INT	cute couple		20mins	yes
4	8		OTS		shoulder rig	Collins Cafe	INT	rack focus to waitress bringing food		20mins	yes
4	9		MS		shoulder rig	Collins Cafe	INT	between two people food and check		20mins	yes
4	10		OTS		shoulder rig	Collins Cafe	INT	Paige at waitress		20mins	yes
4	11		OTS		tripod	Collins Cafe	INT	Waitress to Paige		20mins	yes
4	12		insert		shoulder rig	Collins Cafe	INT	phone		20mins	yes
4	13		insert		shoulder rig	Collins Cafe	INT	food		20mins	yes
4	14		insert		shoulder rig	Collins Cafe	INT	check		20mins	yes

Day 2 of 4

Scene #	Shot #	Camera #	Shot Size	Movement	Gear	Location	EXT/INT	Notes	Preferred	Duration	Sound
6	1		MS (angled)	tracking		Davis	INT	goes from one painting to another		20	
6	2		insert			Davis	INT	Pollock		20	
6	3		insert			Davis	INT	eyes		20	
6	4		MS			Davis	INT	behind Paige		20	
6	5		MWS			Davis	INT	little girl shows up		20	
6	6		MS			Davis	INT	infront of Paige		20	
6	7		insert			Davis	INT	hand getting close to painting		20	
6	8		OTS			Davis	INT	little girl and paige		20	
6	9		OTS			Davis	INT	paige and little girl		20	
6	10		MS			Davis	INT	little girl		20	

Day 3 of 4

Scene #	Shot #	Camera #	Shot Size	Movement	Gear	Location	EXT/INT	Notes	Preferred	Duration	Sound
9	1		WS/establishing		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	She leans against wall			
9	2		MS		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	conversation with mom			
9	3		CU		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	conversation with mom			
9	4		WS		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	writing letter			
9	5		MS		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	writing letter			
9	6		CU		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	writing letter			
9	7		insert		tripod	airbnb	INT	tear on letter			
9	8		insert/OTS		tripod	airbnb	INT	finishing the letter and leaving			
10	1		MS	tracking	shoulder rig	bridge	EXT	walking on bridge			
10	2		WS		shoulder rig	bridge	EXT	walking on bridge			
10	3		MWS		shoulder rig	bridge	EXT	walks up to railing, looks up and down			
10	4		insert		shoulder rig	bridge	EXT	water			
10	5		CU		shoulder rig	bridge	EXT	Paige			
10	6		insert		shoulder rig	bridge	EXT	phone			
10	7		insert		tripod	bridge	EXT	hand grabbing railing			
-1	1		MS	slow zoom	tripod	airbnb	INT	trashcan with trash (include ballet stuff)			
1	1		WS	slow zoom	tripod	airbnb	INT	WS her behind shower curtain			
1	3		CU		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	CU her grabbing a towel			
1	4		CU		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	CU her dabbing shin			
1	5		CU		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	CU chest as she wraps towel around it			
1	6		CU		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	CU her face in her hands			
1	7		CU		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	CU her her knees walking			
1	8		CU		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	CU her grabbing bottle pill			
1	9		CU		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	CU her rips off pill bottle lid			
1	10		CU		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	CU her pouring pills into hand			
1	11		MS		tripod	airbnb	INT	MS her looking at self in mirror			
1	12		WS		tripod	airbnb	INT	WS her looking in mirror, tear starts to fall- looks down			
1	13		CU		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	CU looks up, wipes away tear and breathing, looks down at pills			
1	14		Insert		shoulder rig	airbnb	INT	Insert pill and hand			
1	15		MS		Tripod	airbnb	INT	MS of her in mirror takes meds			

Day 4 of 4

Scene #	Shot #	Camera #	Shot Size	Movement	Gear	Location	EXT/INT	Notes	Preferred	Duration	Sound
2	1		WS		tripod	airbnb	INT	thinking about using phone			
2	2		insert		tripod	airbnb	INT	tapping phone			
2	3		MS		tripod	airbnb	INT	picks up phone and starts call, on call			
2	4		CU		tripod	airbnb	INT	on the phone			
7	1		WS/establishing		tripod	Riverway Park	EXT	whole scene			
7	2		OTS		shoulder rig	Riverway Park	EXT	Old woman walks in			
7	3		OTS		tripod	Riverway Park	EXT	Old woman and Paige			
7	4		MS		shoulder rig	Riverway Park	EXT	Paige			
7	5		MS		tripod	Riverway Park	EXT	Old Woman			
7	6		insert/XCU		tripod	Riverway Park	EXT	smoke and coughing			
10	1		MS	tracking	shoulder rig	bridge	EXT	walking on bridge			
10	2		WS		tripod	bridge	EXT	walking on bridge			
10	3		MWS		shoulder rig	bridge	EXT	walks up to railing, looks up and down			
10	4		insert		tripod	bridge	EXT	water			
10	5		CU		shoulder rig	bridge	EXT	Paige			
10	6		insert		shoulder rig	bridge	EXT	phone			
10	7		insert		shoulder rig	bridge	EXT	hand grabbing railing			

CAMERA LOGS

CAMERA LOG

FRAMING	CAMERA	FIRMWARE	TIME BASE	COLOR/LOOK	CODEC						
SCENE	LENS	STOP	FILTERS	FPS	AS	ISO	KELVIN	TAKES FOCUS	HGT	TILT	NOTES
1A	24mm	"11"	-	24	MS		5000	3	4.4		Shawler
1B								1			
1C	85	16						1			
1D								1 2/1			Shawler
1E								5			no slate 3rd take
1F	85			24				1			same scene
1G	85			24				1			fully slated
1H	85							2			6" bus F
1I	85			24	CV		5000	2			
1K	50										
</											

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FRAMING

24

CAMERA

A9S II

FIRMWARE

TIME BASE

COLOR/LOOK

CODEC

SCENE

LENS

STOP

FILTERS

FPS

AS

ISO

KELVIN

take
count

HGT

TILT

NOTES

2

35

10

—

24

MS

3200

5000

1

8'8"

—

Card D started

↓

—

↓

↓

↓

↓

2

8'8"

—

2A

85

4

ND.6

24

CV

5200

5000

1

8'8"

—

slated correctly

2B

85

4

ND.6

24

CV

5200

5000

1

8'8"

—

slated correctly

2C

85

4

ND.6

24

CV

5200

5000

1

8'8"

—

slate said "Mo" by mistake

↓

↓

↓

↓

↓

↓

↓

2

8'8"

—

cut early

3

CAMERA LOG

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BETTER PICTURES

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BETTER PICTURES

FRAMING	CAMERA	FIRMWARE	TIME BASE	COLOR/LOOK	CODEC
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SCENE	LENS	STOP	FILTERS	FPS	ISO	KELVIN	FOCUS	HGT	TILT	NOTES
4H+1	85	16	-	24	1600	5000	7'8"	4'11"	2.5"	1/50 shutter / 4'11"
4H+2	85	16	-	24	1600	5000	7'8"	4'11"	2.5"	
4L+1	50	16	-	24	1600	5000	6'7"	3'6"	2.5"	silk drape
4L+1	35	16	-	24	1600	5000	2'11"	3'6"	2.5"	silk @ 35 mag
4M+1	50	16	-	24	1600	5000	2'11"	3'6"	2.5"	Series 2 shot ECU
4N+1	50	16	-	24	1600	5000	2'11"	3'6"	2.5"	closer than 4M
								</		

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BETTER PICTURES

FRAMING	CAMERA	FIRMWARE	TIME BASE	COLOR/LOOK	CODEC
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SCENE	LENS	STOP	FILTERS	FPS	ISO	KELVIN	FOCUS	HGT	TILT	NOTES
4AT1	35 mm	5.6		24	WS	2200	3000	8'5"	2'3"	top of roll
4AT2	35 mm	5.6		24	WS	3200	5000	8'5"	2'8"	
4BT1	50 mm	5.6		24	OTSAN	3200	5000	6'7"	5'0"	
4BT2	↓	↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	
4CT1	85 mm	5.6		↓	↓	↓	↓	5'9"	↓	
4CT2	↓	↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	
4OT1	85 mm	5.6		↓	MS	↓	↓	9'0"	4'6"	
4ET1	65 mm	↓		↓	MS	↓	↓	3'8"	↓	
4ET2	↓	↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	
4EPU1	↓	↓		↓	PU	↓	↓	↓	↓	
4E	↓	↓		↓	ECU	↓	↓	2'10"	5'3"	
4G	↓	↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	3'8"	6'6"	series
4AT1	55 mm	5.6		↓	CU	1600	5000	3'0"	4'2"	1st train scene
4BT1	↓	↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	Back
4CT1	↓	↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	2'8"	4'5"	Back; 40S not spec
4DT1	50 mm	↓		24	Tracking	1600	5000	8'5"	3'4"	Tracking shot, Focus up
4DT2	50 mm	↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	Tracking shot
4FT1	70-200mm	↓		↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	4'1"	T. #1

CAMERA LOG

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CAMERA LOG

FRAMING	CAMERA	FIRMWARE	TIME BASE	COLOR/LOOK	CODEC					
SCENE	LENS	STOP	FILTERS	FPS	ISO	KELVIN	FOCUS	HGT	TILT	NOTES
8FT1	70-200mm	5.6	~	24	1600	5000	9'3"	3'6"	S	
8FT2	70-200mm	5.6	~	24	1600	5000	9'3"	3'6"		
8G+1	70-200mm	5.6	~	24	1600	5000	9'5"	3'6"		Flipped over
8G+2										Train in background
										</

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BETTER PICTURES

[illegible]

[illegible]

Day 3 of 4



Audrey Stevens Production

03/03/17

Day 3 of 4

Producer	Jessica Santero	
Director	Phil Teves	508-728-2386
St. Elizabeth's Medical Center		(617) 789-3000
736 Cambridge St, Brighton, MA 02135		

Lasting

BREAKFAST	OWN TIME	
LUNCH	6:00 PM	
SUNRISE		SUNSET 
WEATHER	19° AM	9° PM
Humidity	58%	Windy

Note 1: Individual call times may vary.
Note 2: Questions? Call Audrey Stevens 850-586-4063

CALL 2:00 PM

Note 3: VERY COLD. Bring LOTS of layers.
Note 4: We will be driving students from Wellesley at 1:00PM from Lulu. Email me if you need this. You can also take the bus into Boston.

SCENES	SET AND DESCRIPTION	CHARACTER #	D/N	PAGES	LOCATION/NOTES
1 and 9	SET 1 <i>Airbnb</i>	1	D/N	3	25 Fuller Street Brookline
10	SET 2 <i>Harvard Bridge</i>	1	N	1	Harvard Bridge
	SET 3 <i>Description 3</i>				
	SET 4 <i>Description 4</i>				
	SET 5 <i>Description 5</i>				
		TOTAL PAGES			

#	CAST	CHARACTER	SWHF	MU	SET	MINOR?	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
1	Shea Whitehead	Paige	W	2:00 PM	2:00 PM		
2	Marina Pitombeira	Jasmine	-				
3	Karina Ithier	Waitress	-				
4	Brooke Peasley	Little Girl	-				
5	Stacey Peasley	Little Girl's Mother	-				
6	Mary Wexler	Old Woman	-				

PRODUCTION NOTES

No shoes allowed when in the Airbnb.	We will be on a bridge. BE CAREFUL.
--------------------------------------	-------------------------------------

POSITION	NAME	PHONE	IN
Director	Phil Teves	508-728-2386	2:00 PM
1st AD	Kyliah Ashton	774-994-9823	2:00 PM
2nd AD	Camille Bond	305-332-0464	2:00 PM
Dir. of Photography	Audrey Stevens	850-586-4063	2:00 PM
1st AC	Matt Sullivan	603-479-7474	2:00 PM
2nd AC	Michelle Lu	908-361-5004	2:00 PM
Swing	Jennifer Fang	949-923-9097	2:00 PM
Gaffer	Brandon McGinnis	760-382-1746	2:00 PM
Key Grip	Katie Sweatman	732-429-3177	2:00 PM
Key Makeup Artist	Joanna LaPerriere	307-797-6415	14:00
Sound Mixer	Suika Sono-knowles	845-616-1987	2:00 PM
Boom Op	Hannah Cho	248-525-5541	2:00 PM

[illegible]

Day 4 of 4



Audrey Stevens Production

03/05/17

Day 4 of 4

Producer	Jessica Santero	
Director	Phil Teves	508-728-2386
St. Elizabeth's Medical Center		(617) 789-3000
736 Cambridge St, Brighton, MA 02135		

Lasting

BREAKFAST	7:00 AM	
LUNCH	12:00 PM	
SUNRISE	 6:14 AM	SUNSET 5:40 PM 
WEATHER	10° AM	25° PM
Humidity		

Note 1: Individual call times may vary.
Note 2: Questions? Call Audrey Stevens 850-586-4063

CALL	7:00 AM
------	---------

Note 3: VERY COLD. Bring LOTS of layers.
Note 4: We will be driving students from Wellesley at 6:20AM

SCENES	SET AND DESCRIPTION	CHARACTER #	D/N	PAGES	LOCATION/NOTES
2	SET 1	1	D	3	25 Fuller Street Brookline
	Airbnb				
7	SET 2	1	D	1	Riverway Park
	Riverway Park				
10	SET 3	1	N	1	Harvard Bridge
	Harvard Bridge				
	SET 4				
	Description 4				
	SET 5				
	Description 5				
			TOTAL PAGES	6	

#	CAST	CHARACTER	SWHF	MU	SET	MINOR?	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
1	Shea Whitehead	Paige	W	8:00 AM	7:00 AM		
2	Marina Pitombeira	Jasmine	-				
3	Karina Ithier	Waitress	-				
4	Brooke Peasley	Little Girl	-				
5	Stacey Peasley	Little Girl's Mother	-				
6	Mary Wexler	Old Woman	SWHF	1:00 PM	1:00 PM		

PRODUCTION NOTES

No shoes allowed when in the Airbnb.

We will be on a bridge. BE CAREFUL.

POSITION	NAME	PHONE	IN
Director	Phil Teves	508-728-2386	7:00 AM
1st AD	Kyah Ashton	774-994-9823	7:00 AM
2nd AD	Camille Bond	305-332-0464	7:00 AM
Dir. of Photography	Audrey Stevens	850-586-4063	7:00 AM
1st AC	Matt Sullivan	603-479-7474	7:00 AM
2nd AC	Michelle Lu	908-361-5004	6:00 PM
Swing	Jennifer Fang	949-923-9097	6:00 PM
Gaffer	Brandon McGinnis	760-382-1746	7:00 AM
Key Grip	Katie Sweatman	732-429-3177	7:00 AM
Key Makeup Artist	Joanna LaPerriere	307-797-6415	7:00
Sound Mixer	Suika Sono-knowles	845-616-1987	6:00 PM
Boom Op	Hannah Cho	248-525-5541	6:00 PM

[illegible]

STORYBOARDS & OVERHEADS

scheduling

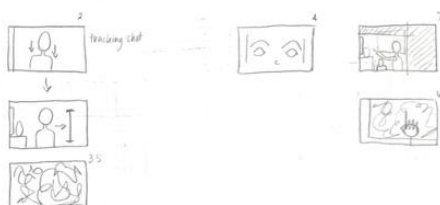
Saturday-meeting 3-5
Bridg snoot
7-9

5 v n d a y : C a f e & T s t o p
5 1/2 p a g e s

Monday: MUSEUM
1 page

March 4th (Sat): a i r b n b

March 5th (Sun): park | airbnb

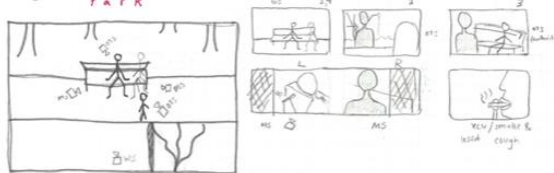


Overheads
Thesis

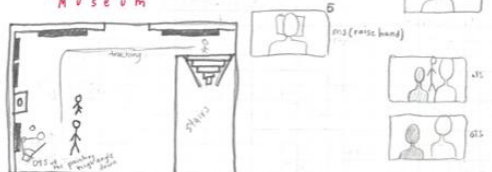
④ Collins



7. Riverwa
Park



6. Davis
Museum



overheads
+ thesis

9. House - Night



insert last shot



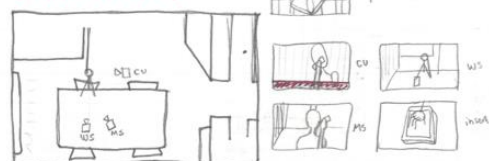
Starts writing in
ms, show passage of
time by less whistling

Paige signing, letting, putting pen down & leaving

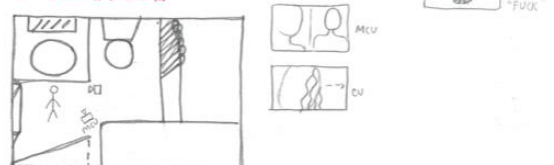
10. Bridge



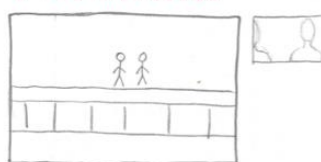
2. House - Day

overheads
thesis

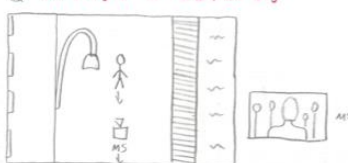
1. Bathroom



8. TrainStation



⑤ Bridge - Walking



III. CREATIVE CONTENT

Crew

Director - Phil Teves (Boston)

Director of Photography- Audrey Stevens (2017, Wellesley)

Unit Production Manager - Jessica Santero (2017, Wellesley)

1st Assistant Director - Kyiah Ashton (2019, Wellesley)

2nd Assistant Director - Camille Bond (2017, Wellesley)

1st Assistant Camera - Matthew “Sully” Sullivan (Marlboro) and Pen (NYC)

2nd Assistant Camera - Michelle Lu (2018, Wellesley)

Executive Producer/Gaffer/Colorist - Brandon (Marlboro)

Grip - Katie Sweatman (2017, Wellesley)

Swing - Jennifer Fang (2017, Wellesley)

Sound Mixer - Suika Sono-knowles (2020, Wellesley)

Boom Op - Hannah Cho (2020, Wellesley)

Makeup / art - Joanna LaPerriere (2017, Wellesley)

Composer - Nicholas Kelley (Boston)

Cast

Shea Whitehead - Paige (Boston)

Brooke Peasley - Little Girl (Town of Wellesley)

Stacey Peasley - Little Girl’s Mom (Town of Wellesley)

Marina Pitombeira - Jasmine (Town of Wellesley)

Karina Ithier - Waitress (2020, Wellesley)

Deborah Matzner - Paige’s Mom (Boston)

Extras - Priyanka Ram (2017, Wellesley), Dorien Villafranco (Boston University), Christina Lepore (2017, Wellesley)

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ESCAPE FROM REASON
WRITTEN BY AUDREY STEVENS

1. INT. BATHROOM - DAY

SHOWER WATER RUNNING.

PAIGE O.S.

Fuck! Oh fuck!

SCRUBBING.

WATER TURNING OFF.

PAIGE O.S. (CONT'D)

Fuck fuck fuck... God dammit... fuck...

SHOWER CURTAIN MOVING.

PAIGE steps out of the shower and onto the bathroom floor.

PAIGE O.S. (CONT'D)

Shit... You're so stupid...

Paige is a 23 year old female who is self-critical and a perfectionist. She grabs her towel, pads her shin rapidly to get rid of the blood, and then wraps it around her.

PAIGE

(under her breath)

Dammit Paige... you had one job... You couldn't even shave your fucking leg without screwing up...

She runs over to the counter and reaches for the bottle of pills.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

Can't do a single thing right...

She rips off the lid and pours them all in her hand.

PAIGE (CONT'D)

You're useless...

She stares at herself in the mirror. Her wet hair partially

cover bits of her face. A tear falls down her face; she wipes it away.

She breathes a deep breath out, calming herself down.

She looks back down at the pills, gripping them tightly.

After taking a moment, she releases her grip and pours them back into the bottle, leaving two balancing on the edge.

Closing her eyes, she releases a breath of "fuck it" attitude, making the decision to make her last day at least bearable.

She puts the bottle away and takes the two pills.

2. INT. KITCHEN TABLE - DAY

Paige sits at the kitchen table, tapping her finger on the screen of her phone, anxiously building up the courage to call her boss.

She is doing some breathing exercises.

She gives a sigh of relinquishment and grabs the phone and calls her boss.

BOSS

Where are you, Paige?

PAIGE

Hello, sir. I just have to ask...I know I am pushing it, but I have to ask for today off.

BOSS

Paige, this is the third time this month. I'm not having you out another day.

PAIGE

I really can't miss out on this opportunity.

BOSS

Opportunity?

Paige looks around the kitchen, trying to come up with something to say

PAIGE

Yes. I have an audition.

BOSS

You are not wasting my time and money on some audition.

PAIGE

I need this one, sir.

BOSS

I know you need this one, but Jordan has covered for you way too much. I can't constantly have to try to find a replacement for you.

PAIGE

Please sir, I'll take the graveyard shift!

BOSS

The graveyard shift is a permanent position. You would need training, and I cannot afford to spend that time or money getting you ready.

PAIGE

What do you want?

BOSS

I want an employee that cares about her coworkers, who cares about keeping her job.

Paige waits anxiously for a response.

BOSS CONT.

This is the last time I'm allowing this. Next time, you won't have a job to come back to.

Paige closes her eyes and nods to herself, knowing that there won't be a next time.

PAIGE

Yes, thank you, sir.

Paige hangs up the phone.

She gets up, gathers her bag and leaves.

4. INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Paige doesn't bother looking at the menu; she knows exactly what she wants.

Waitress puts mimosa down on table.

WAITRESS

It's never too early for a mimosa.

PAIGE

It's that perfect all-day drink.

WAITRESS

Haha, what can I get you?

PAIGE

(embarrassed and quiet)

Bacon with a side of home fries, lots of ketchup,
fried egg over medium, granola with yogurt, and, waffles
with strawberries and extra whipped cream, please.

Waitress notices Paige is embarrassed about the large order.

WAITRESS

Going all out huh?... Don't be ashamed, we all deserve
a girls' day!

Waitress looks at Paige waiting for a response.

Waitress gives a little nervous chuckle.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
(a little too loud)

So you ordered one bacon with a side of home fries,
lots of ketchup, fried egg over medium, granola with
yogurt, and waffles with strawberries and extra whipped
cream.

PAIGE
(embarrassed)

Correct.

WAITRESS
Anything else I can get you?

PAIGE
A slice of cherry pie.

WAITRESS
(whispers)
One cherry pie coming right up.

Waitress leaves, and Paige is alone again.

Paige looks at the mimosa and takes only a couple of sips from
it.

Waitress comes back.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
One bacon with a side of home fries, lots of ketchup,
fried egg over medium-

Paige interrupts the waitress.

PAIGE

Thank you.

WAITRESS

Sure, let me know if you need help devouring all that.

Waitress leaves.

Paige stares at all the food. She grabs her fork and knife and starts taking a couple of bites from each plate, leaving the majority of food left on the plate. She starts from the most savory to the most sweet, finishing with a small bite of cherry pie from the crust side. She sits back up after finishing her small bites.

Waitress comes back.

She looks at all the semi-full plates.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

Was everything ok?

PAIGE

It was all great, thank you.

WAITRESS

Are you done, then?

PAIGE

Yes.

WAITRESS

Wow...Would you like the rest to go?

PAIGE

No, please.

WAITRESS

You know, I always love going on walks after a huge meal... Know any good parks near here? I'm new to the area...

PAIGE

Uh, yea. Ton of parks.

WAITRESS

Which one would you say is the best?

PAIGE

Um, Peddlestone.

WAITRESS

Is that the one a couple blocks from here? I always see people walking their dogs there.

PAIGE

I guess.

WAITRESS

Oh, ok... Well, thanks for the help.

PAIGE

No problem.

WAITRESS

Can I get you the check?

PAIGE

Please.

Waitress nods and leaves again.

Paige looks at her phone. No messages.

WAITRESS

Here you go.

PAIGE

Thanks.

WAITRESS

No problem! You really know how to have a girls' day, let me know if you want company on the next one.

PAIGE

(politely)

Thank you, will do.

WAITRESS

I'll still be here!

Paige looks down at her check to see a note, *Remember to have the best day ever! :)*

She ignores the message. She pays exact change and leaves a 15% tip. She frustratingly takes the customer copy and crinkles it up.

She gets up and quickly leaves the restaurant and avoids eye contact with anyone, especially the waitress.

6. INT. MUSEUM - DAY

Paige is looking deeply and intensely at a painting. She stands alone in an empty gallery. She walks from painting to painting, stopping to look at each one, carefully and precisely.

She stops at one painting in particular.

She stares at it, experiencing its beauty.

She takes a step forward. She starts to look closer.

She looks around her to see if anyone is around her.

She looks back at the painting and raises her hand.

She is inches away when she hears a young voice.

YOUNG GIRL

It's never fun being by yourself, want to be friends?
Is this one your favorite? Like my tutu?

Paige quickly turns around to see a little girl wearing a tutu. The little girl is around three years old with beautiful, natural curls and a glimmer of hope and innocence in her eye.

The little girl is twirling around showing off her tutu.

PAIGE

I do...

YOUNG GIRL

Are you a ballerina too?!

PAIGE

...Used to be...

The mother comes running towards them and grabs the little girl's arm.

YOUNG GIRL'S MOM

I told you not to run off like that. (to Young Girl) I'm so sorry, ma'am! (to Paige)

The mom drags her daughter away.

The little girl turns and looks back at Paige.

Her and Paige lock eyes and stare at each other for what seems like hours.

The little girl then turns back around and walks away.

Paige breaks away from what seems like a trance, and more people start to come in.

She notices all the people and quickly runs away from the museum, never touching the painting.

7. EXT. PARK - DAY

Paige walks and sits on a bench. She takes out her half-read version of *Anna Karenina* and a new box of cigarettes. She sets

Anna Karenina on the bench next to her. She then looks at the cigarettes as though as they are an old family member she has not seen in a long time.

She rips the wrappings off, takes out a cigarette, lights it, and smokes it. The look of pure ecstasy rushes over her face.

She starts going into a coughing fit while blowing out the smoke.

She picks up the book, half read, and continues reading.

FADE IN:

Paige has gone through almost the whole pack of cigarettes and now 3/4 of the book (the moment when Anna commits suicide at the train station).

An old woman comes up, coughing, and they make eye contact.

Paige looks away and continues to smoke and read.

Woman sits on bench with Paige.

Paige scoots over.

Old woman scoots over.

Paige scoot over as well.

Old woman gets super close.

Paige gets up and smokes, coughs, and, book in hand, leaves the old lady on the bench by herself.

8. EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Paige sits alone finishing *Anna Karenina*.

She closes it.

It is sunset.

She looks around and notices that no one else is around.

She gets up.

Leaves the book and her purse on the seat.

She walks toward the edge.

She looks down at the rails.

She looks back up.

She closes her eyes.

She takes a breath.

UNKNOWN VOICE

PAIGE!

Paige turns around stunned.

It's JASMINE. An old friend from dance that she hasn't seen since she was kicked out.

JASMINE

I have been trying to call you for weeks!

PAIGE

(shocked)

Jasmine...

Paige fumbles trying to think of something to say.

JASMINE

I was worried that you dropped off the face of the earth...or just didn't want to speak to me ever again... I was worried that I hadn't done enough or had done something wrong...

PAIGE

No, no, I... I just needed some time to figure things out.

JASMINE

I understand that, and I kind of guessed that...especially since it was so out of the blue...

PAIGE

Yea...

JASMINE

But enough about that, how have you been since?

Paige can hear the train coming; it is getting closer.

PAIGE

I've been doing well, just working.

JASMINE

That's good, at least... You full time now then?

PAIGE

Yea, it's not the best job, but it pays the bills.

Paige can see the lights of the train coming.

JASMINE

That's good. I'm glad everything ended up working out.

PAIGE

Yea, same.

Paige can see the train now.

JASMINE

You know I was just talking to my mom about you. She asked how you were doing, and I had to be honest with her and be like, "I have no idea. I haven't heard from her in awhile."

PAIGE

Oh, tell her I say hi.

JASMINE

I will! She said she missed hearing about you... and honestly I missed talking about you... I missed talking to you... for a while there I thought I had lost my best friend...

Paige looks back at Jasmine.

JASMINE CONT.

I miss you, Paige.

The train flies past Paige and Jasmine.

Paige stands there looking at her like she is crazy.

PAIGE

I... I need to go. I have... an audition...

JASMINE

Oh, that's awesome, good luck!

PAIGE

Thanks.

Paige starts to back away.

JASMINE

Well, it was amazing seeing you again! I'll text you, and please answer this time.

Paige runs back to her house, confused and flustered.

9. INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Paige rushes into her house.

She leans up against the wall, and falls to the floor.

She starts to sob almost uncontrollably.

She opens her phone and calls her mom.

She leans her head against the wall and closes her eyes, hoping she answers.

PAIGE

Please answer, please answer...

MOM

Paige! How are you, baby?

Paige gives a sigh of relief.

PAIGE

Hey Mom, I'm good, I just wanted to call you to say hi.

MOM

Hey stranger! It is so good to hear from you. Tell me all about what's going on.

PAIGE

Nothing much really. I saw Jasmine today.

MOM

That's great! How is she?

PAIGE

She's good. She actually mentioned how she was talking to her mom which made me think of you.

MOM

Aww, and that's so good to hear! I know you haven't spoken with her since dance ended...

PAIGE

Yea... It was nice seeing her again...Actually, while talking to her I couldn't help but think of you... I was

actually thinking about that time we drove to the Grand Canyon... We kept arguing about stupid stuff, the heater, snacks, and whatever else we were arguing about... I just wanted to say that... I'm really sorry... It was my fault, and it wasn't you... and I don't blame you at all...

MOM

Baby, it's ok. It was so long ago, and it was a stressful time for both of us... since your father left... Please baby, don't blame yourself.

PAIGE

I just feel really bad... I feel like I've hurt or disappointed you in some way.

MOM

You have never disappointed me, Paige. Why would you say that? Are you ok?

PAIGE

Yea, Mom, I'm ok. The past couple days have just been a little difficult.

MOM

Aww, baby. I know, but you are going to get through it, and you know you can always call your mother.

PAIGE

I know... I really miss talking to you, mom, I'm really sorry for not calling before...

MOM

It's ok! I know you are super busy with work and everything. Please baby, stop worrying. Everything is going to be ok.

Paige hears these words and starts to feel the tears coming, breathes and tries to prevent herself from sounding like she is crying.

PAIGE

Thank you, Mom. I love you.

Paige grasps her face in her hands.

MOM

I love you too, baby.

A single tear runs down her face. She wipes it away and composes herself by taking deep breaths in and out.

PAIGE

Anyway, I have to go, I've got some stuff to do.

MOM

Ok, baby! It was good talking to you, have a good night!

PAIGE

Thanks, mom.

Paige hangs up the phone.

She leans her head against the wall, brings her phone up to her face, closes her eyes, and bursts into tears.

She walks to her kitchen, pours a drink of whiskey, gets a pen and paper and starts to write a letter. As she writes the letter, a tear falls down onto the paper. She finishes it, gets up, and quickly leaves the house.

10. EXT. BRIDGE/CITY - NIGHT

She makes her way to the bridge. She is confident and calm.

She gets to the bridge.

She looks up into the sky and the city around her. She looks down into the water, and the icy wind cuts her, causing her to shiver and close her eyes.

PAIGE

You can finally stop hurting them...

She grips the railing tightly, taking a moment to compose herself.

She releases her grip.

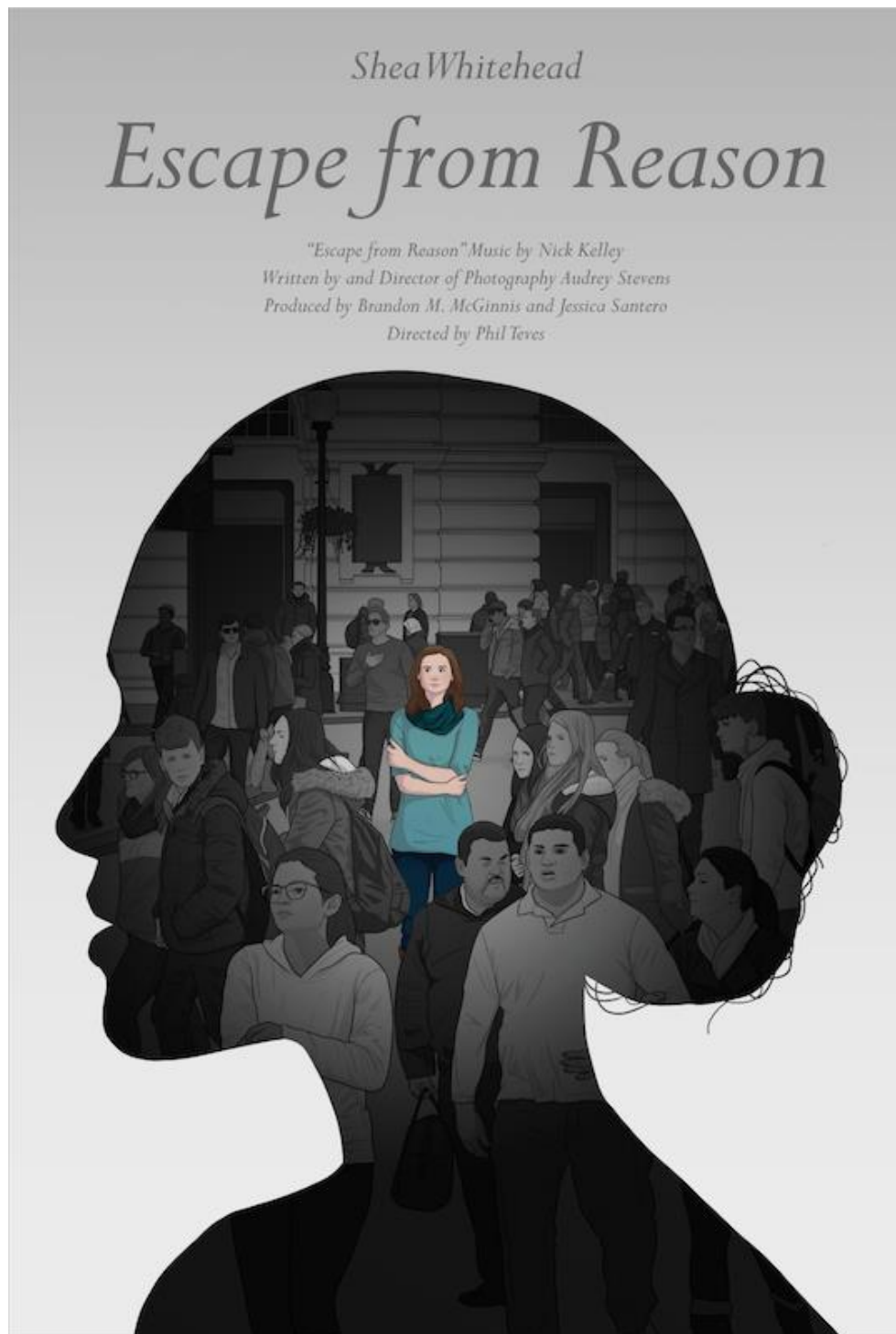
She takes out her phone. 1 new message. It is a message from Jasmine: *Hey! It was great seeing you again. Answer this time, hehe. ;)*

She puts the phone down.

She looks around her.

She puts her purse on the ground, grabs the railing, and jumps.

THE END



Poster Design by Michelle Gao '17

ESCAPE FROM REASON - DIGITAL COPY

To view *Escape from Reason*, please use the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/a/wellesley.edu/file/d/0B3LDSkENjiCqNHJLelcyR0hXR00/view?usp=sharing>